



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE  
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CHICAGO, IL 60604

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# NEWS RELEASE

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Friday, October 12, 2001

## **POLISH NATIONAL ALLEGEDLY POSED AS INS OFFICIAL IN IMMIGRATION FRAUD SCHEME**

**CHICAGO** – A suburban Palatine woman has been charged with defrauding money from individuals in exchange for arranging legal immigration status, Brian R. Perryman, District Director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and Patrick J. Fitzgerald, U. S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, announced today.

The defendant, Iwona E. Lovejoy, allegedly impersonated an INS employee according to a criminal information that was filed this week in Federal Court. Lovejoy, 35, of 1504 Silver Lane, Palatine, was initially arrested on Sept. 5 and released from custody on her own recognizance. She will be arraigned on Oct. 17 in U.S. District Court in Chicago.

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According to the charges, between February and April of this year, Lovejoy posed as an INS employee and demanded and obtained at least \$4,500 from individual victims. She allegedly placed an advertisement in a Russian-language newspaper circulated in the Chicago area, offering to provide lawful immigration status in the U.S. for a fee. She later told individuals who responded that she was an INS employee and could arrange legal status for the individuals and their families in exchange for a fee ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500. Lovejoy allegedly received fees from an unspecified number of individuals.

In fact, according to the charges, Lovejoy was never employed by the INS and took no steps to secure legal immigration status for those individuals from whom she solicited and received fees.

INS urges those who might be victims of Lovejoy's alleged scheme to call the INS at 312-353-4465.

If convicted, impersonating a federal employee carries a maximum penalty of three years in prison, a \$250,000 fine and mandatory restitution. The Court, however, would determine the appropriate sentence to be imposed under the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The public is reminded that this information contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the United States has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

**INS**